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ABSTRACT

To assist the learner of English as a second language in dealing with such personal occasions as weddings and funerals, a series of dialogs, comprehension questions, readings, and points of discussion are presented. The text is illustrated. (JB)

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ED195152

STUDENT LESSON #17

CELEBRATIONS
UNIT II
PERSONAL CELEBRATIONS

English for Living

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UNIT II—PERSONAL CELEBRATIONS

A WEDDING

SITUATION SETTER

Americans have many personal celebrations. Weddings, a new baby, a birthday and an anniversary are often celebrated. Let's see what happens when Alicia and Pepe get married, have a baby, celebrate a child's birthday, and celebrate an anniversary.

DIALOG 1A

Beatriz and Manuel have just received an invitation to Alicia and Pepe's wedding.

Beatriz: Alicia and Pepe are going to get married! We just got an invitation.
Manuel: When's the wedding?
Beatriz: It's June 3rd, at 10:00 a.m. at St. Mary's Church.
Manuel: What happens after the church wedding?
Beatriz: We're also invited to a reception after the wedding, at the Golden Flame Restaurant.
Manuel: What happens at the reception.
Beatriz: There's food to eat. The bride and groom cut the wedding cake, and everyone gets a piece of the cake. Everyone congratulates the bride and groom.
Manuel: We have to buy them a gift, don't we?
Beatriz: Yes, we do. We should buy the gift before the wedding and bring it to the reception. The gift should be something the bride and groom need for their new home.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What kind of invitation did Beatriz and Manuel receive?
2. When is the wedding?
3. What is a wedding reception?
4. Do you have to buy a gift?
5. What kind of a gift would you buy? When do you give the gift?

DIALOG 1B

Beatriz and Manuel are at the wedding reception. They are talking about weddings.

Manuel: Who are the men and women who were standing next to the bride and groom?
Beatriz: The women are the bridesmaids. The one who stood closest to her is the maid of honor, and the man who stood closest to the groom is the best man. They are also the legal witnesses. The other men are the ushers. They are friends of the bride and groom, and they show people where to sit.
Manuel: Do Americans have to get married in a church?
Beatriz: No, they don't. They can be married by some public officials, such as a justice of the peace, or they can also have a wedding at home, outdoors, or in a party room at a hotel. They can have a wedding almost anywhere, but most people like to get married in a church.

MINI-DIALOG

Beatriz: Look! Alicia's going to throw her bouquet!
Manuel: Why is she going to do that?
Beatriz: It's a tradition. She throws her bouquet to the bridesmaids, and the one who catches it will be the next one to get married.

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COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who also stands with the bride and groom?
2. Do Americans have to get married in a church?
3. What will happen to the bridesmaid that catches the bride's bouquet?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What are weddings like in your country?
2. What kinds of wedding traditions do you have in your country?
3. What do the bride and groom wear?

DIALOG 1C

The wedding reception is almost over. The bride and groom are leaving.

Beatriz: Look! The bride and groom are leaving. We can go home after they leave.

Manuel: Someone put signs saying "Just Married" on their car, and tied some cans to the car. Why did they do that?

Beatriz: That's a tradition. People do that so everyone will know that they were just married.

Manuel: Where are the bride and groom going?

Beatriz: They are going on a honeymoon. That is a trip that the people take together after they get married. The bride and groom don't tell anyone where they are going.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What did someone do the bride and groom's car?
2. Where are the bride and groom going?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think the bride and groom don't tell anyone where they are going?
2. Do people go on honeymoons in your country?

MICROCONVERSATION: Practice this conversation with another student.

Student A: What did you give Alicia for a wedding gift?
Student B: I gave her a coffee pot.
sheets and pillow cases.
a set of towels.
a set of glasses.
a pretty dish.

ROLE PLAY: DISCUSSION

Have you ever been to a wedding? Tell your friends what it was like, and what you gave the bride.

A NEW BABY

DIALOG 2

Isabela is giving a baby shower for her friend Alicia. She is inviting Beatriz to the shower.

Isabela: Alicia's going to have a baby soon, so I am giving a shower for her.
Beatriz: What's a shower?
Isabela: It's a party that someone has for a woman who is going to have a baby. Each person brings a gift.
Beatriz: What kind of gift should I bring?
Isabela: It should be something that the baby will need.
Beatriz: Are baby showers the only kind of showers?
Isabela: No. Sometimes people give showers for girlfriends who are getting married.
Beatriz: What happens at a shower?
Isabela: Usually women are invited. Sometimes you play games. The woman you are giving the shower for opens the gifts. Usually there is something to eat.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a shower?
2. Is a baby shower the only kind of shower?
3. Does a person give a shower for himself or herself?
4. What kind of gift should you bring to a baby shower?

DIALOG 2B

When a baby is born, the new parents sometimes send a card to their family and friends. The card tells when the baby was born, what its name is, and how much it weighs. Beatriz has just received a card from Alicia.

Beatriz: Alicia had a baby boy. His name is Eduardo.
Isabela: I'd like to see her and the baby. I didn't go to the shower, but I'd like to buy a gift for the baby.
Beatriz: That's a good idea, but should we wait two or three weeks. She needs to rest.
Isabela: Is there something I can do right now?
Beatriz: Why don't you send her a baby card? You can find some nice ones in the card store.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What do new parents send to their friends when they have a baby? What does the card tell their friends?
2. Should Isabela go to see Alicia right away? Why not?
3. What can she do right now?

Happy
Shower

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What do you do in your country when someone has a baby?
2. Do you have parties for someone who is going to have a baby?

MICROCONVERSATION

Student A: I want to buy a baby gift for Alicia. What should I buy her?
Student B: She probably needs baby clothes.
a baby dish.
nightgowns.
baby blankets.
sheets for the crib.
undershirts for the baby.

A BIRTHDAY PARTY

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Americans celebrate their birthdays every year. Children often have birthday parties and invite their friends. Families celebrate each birthday in the family, and even adults have birthday cakes and receive gifts.

DIALOG 3

Chepo is invited to Miguel's birthday party. Miguel is the younger brother of Chepo's friend Tomas. He is telling his father, Manuel, about the party.

Chepo: Dad, I am invited to Miguel's birthday party. He's going to be eleven years old.

Manuel: What do you do at a birthday party?

Chepo: Everyone gives Miguel gifts, and he opens them. His mother makes a birthday cake, and puts candles on top of the cake. We eat ice cream with the cake.

Manuel: How many candles does she put on top of the cake?

Chepo: There will be one candle for every year and one for "good luck." That means Miguel will have twelve candles this year.

Manuel: What happens after his mother lights the candles?

Chepo: Everyone sings "Happy Birthday" to Miguel. Then he tries to blow out all the candles at once.

Manuel: Why does he do that?

Chepo: He makes a wish before he blows out the candles. If he blows them all out at once, he'll get his wish.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Chepo invited to?
2. How old will Miguel be?
3. How many candles will there be on the cake? Why?
4. What will they eat at the party?
5. What does everyone give Miguel?
6. What happens after his mother lights the candles?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you celebrate birthdays in your country?
2. How do you celebrate birthdays in your country?
3. Does everyone celebrate his birthday every year?

READING

Americans sing "Happy Birthday" when it is someone's birthday. Here are the words:

Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday, dear _____,
Happy birthday to you.

ROLE PLAY

It is someone's birthday. Plan a birthday party. Sing "Happy Birthday" to him or her, and have some birthday cake.

A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

Married people celebrate their wedding anniversary each year. They may do something special together, such as having dinner in a nice restaurant. Their family and friends send them anniversary cards. If it is a special anniversary, such as a 25th or 50th anniversary, their family or friends may have a party for them.

DIALOG 4

Alicia and Pepe are celebrating their twelfth wedding anniversary.

Alicia: Did you see our cards? We got cards from your father and from our friends Beatriz and Miguel.
Pepe: That's nice. Just think, tomorrow it will be twelve years since we got married. Where would you like to go to dinner?
Alicia: I'd like to go to the Golden Flame Restaurant.
Pepe: Then I'll make reservations. I also bought you an anniversary gift, and I'll give it to you then.
Alicia: I have a gift for you, too.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How do Americans celebrate their anniversary?
2. Do they celebrate it every year?
3. What do their friends do?
4. How long have Alicia and Pepe been married?
5. How are they going to celebrate their anniversary?

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Do you celebrate wedding anniversaries each year in your country?
2. How do people celebrate a wedding anniversary?

MICROCONVERSATION: Practice this conversation with another student.

Student A: What did your mother and father do for their anniversary?
Student B: They had a good time. They went to the Golden Flame for dinner.
They cooked a special dinner at home.
They bought each other a nice gift.
They took a short trip.

A FUNERAL

BACKGROUND TO THE DIALOG

When someone dies, there is a funeral. A funeral is a short ceremony in a funeral home or a church. There are also times before the day of the funeral when you may go to the funeral home to talk to the family of the dead person. Those times are called "calling hours."

DIALOG 5

Pepe's father died. Beatriz and Manuel are good friends of Pepe. They are talking about what they should do.

Beatriz: Pepe's father died. What should we do?
Manuel: We should send Pepe and Alicia a sympathy card. Did the newspaper announcement say when the funeral is?
Beatriz: Yes, It's at 2:00 p.m. on Friday. There are calling hours Wednesday and Thursday, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Manuel: Then we should go to see Alicia and Pepe.
Beatriz: Should we go to the funeral?
Manuel: I'd like to go to the funeral, because they're very good friends. A funeral is for the family, and for friends.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a funeral?
2. Who died?
3. What are Beatriz and Manuel going to send to Pepe?
4. What are "calling hours"?
5. Why does Manuel want to go to the funeral?